FROM TWO ARABIC MANUSCRIPTS: 1, a 15th Century book of Islamic devotions; 2, a modern Algerian Koran. The former (the smaller leaf) is a splendid example of the style of calligraphy known as Moghrebi, a picturesque script that has been employed for centuries in Algeria, Morocco, and throughout North Africa generally, with the exception of Egypt. Such manuscripts are nearly always decorated, or at least rubricated, and possess a barbaric beauty that gives Moghrebi a unique position among the many styles of Arabic writing. It is less popular with scholars than with artists, however, as it is difficult to decipher. ¶ The Koran leaf (the larger), also written in Moghrebi, is interesting because of its crude characters and its primitive decorations. The paper in both examples is of European manufacture. Although the Moors introduced paper into Europe, the art so flourished there that the trade was soon reversed, with European papers finding their way into Muslim lands. ¶ Arabic is a Semitic language, derived from the Aramean alphabet, and is written from right to left. Its gradual evolution, as a philologist puts it, "into a curious 'short hand' with its many ambiguous abbreviations of the historic letters, is one of the most remarkable transformations known in the history of calligraphy". And no less remarkable, we may add, was the swift spread of this once insignificant dialect, unaided by the printing press, to a commanding position among the languages of the world.

أن تطلق ألسنتنا عند السؤال وأن توفقنا
لصالح الأعمال وتجعلنا من الآمنين يوم
الرجف والزلزال يا ذا العزة والجلال
أسألك يا نور النور قبل الأزمنة والدهور
أنت الباقي بلا زوال الغني بلا مثال القدوس
الطاهر العلي القاهر الذي لا يحيط
به مكان ولا يشتمل عليه زمان أسألك
بأسمائك الحسنى كلها وبأعظم أسما
ئك إليك وأشرفها عندك منزلة وأجز
لها عندك ثوابا وأسرعها منك إجابة
وباسمك المخزون المكنون الجليل الأجل
الكبير الأكبر العظيم الأعظم الذي تحبه
وترضى عمن دعاك به وتستجيب له

الرجفة
والزلازل